

REMARKS:

Status of claims and amendments

Claim 1 is pending in the application. In the Office Action dated May 18, 2006, the Examiner rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph, as being indefinite, and rejected claim 1 under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Choi in view of Murray et al. and Raymond et al.

In this amendment, claim 1 was amended to overcome two of the three §112 rejections. No new matter is added. The third §112 rejection and the §103(a) rejection are respectfully traversed.

The §112 rejections

1. ECU

All recitations of the term “ECU” have been amended to read “electrical control unit.”

2. a chassis member

This rejection is respectfully traversed. The Examiner indicated that “it is unclear how an opening and closing mechanism for a sliding door can comprise a vehicle body.” However, Applicant is not claiming an opening and closing mechanism for a sliding door comprising a vehicle body. Rather, this limitation reads “the door-open state keeping unit includes a coupling link rotatably coupled with a protrusion of a chassis member.” Given FIGs. 4A and 4B and the descriptions thereof in the specification, particularly at paragraphs 37, 49, Applicant respectfully asserts that this limitation is not unclear.

3. the link

The recitation of “the link” on line 10 has been amended to read “the link of the controller.”

The §103(a) rejection

This rejection is respectfully traversed. Raymond's micro-switches are used to measure the time it takes the door to close and thus determine whether something is blocking the path of the door (column 2 lines 60-65, column 4 lines 35-41). Raymond's switches do not send signals indicative of the locking state and releasing state of a latch. In contrast, the micro-switch of the present invention functions to detect locking and releasing states of the door-open state keeping unit (paragraphs [0037] and [0038]) in order to control operation of the actuator (paragraph [0041]). Inventive claim 1 recites the limitation of "controlling operation of the actuator by receiving a detecting signal regarding the locking state and the releasing state of the door-open state keeping unit from the micro-switch." The Examiner has not even attempted to address this limitation; but has merely stated that "Raymond et al. discloses the use of micro switches 4 and 5 to determine the position of a latch 7." Switches 4 and 5 are used only to measure the time it takes the door to close, not whether the latch is in the locking state or the releasing state.

Further, as Raymond's switches are used only to determine if something is blocking the path of the door, there is no motivation to provide them to a door-open state keeping unit.

Still further, as the cited references fail to teach a micro-switch sending a signal regarding the locking state and the releasing state of a door-open state keeping unit, they cannot possibly teach the specific function of the signal regarding the state of the door-open state keeping unit recited in claim 1, namely

controlling a driving source for opening or closing the sliding door by receiving a signal from a door switch and controlling operation of the actuator by receiving a detecting signal regarding the locking state and the releasing state of the door-open state keeping unit from the micro-switch, wherein the electrical control unit receives a door-close signal from the door switch when the sliding door is in a door-open keeping state, the electrical control unit releases the door-open state keeping unit by operating the actuator if the door-open state keeping unit is in the locking state, and the electrical control unit operates the driving source to close the sliding door.

The cited references simply do not teach or suggest controlling a driving source by receiving a detecting signal, releasing the door-open state keeping unit by operating the actuator, or operating the driving source to close the door as claimed. Claim 1 is thus patentable over Choi, Murray, and Raymond.

Conclusions

In view of the foregoing, Applicant believes the claim now pending in this application is in condition for allowance. The issuance of a formal Notice of Allowance is respectfully requested.

Authorization is granted to charge any outstanding fees due at this time for the continued prosecution of this matter to Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP Deposit Account No. 50-0310 (matter no. 060949-0009).

Respectfully submitted,

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